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VOLUME XXII NUMBER 7

Dance

JULY, 1948

RUDOLPH ORTHWINE
Editor and Publisher

CONTENTS

VIA THE GRAPEVINE 5
NEW DANCE GROUP FESTIVAL SERIES by Doris Hering 8
PAGES FROM A SPANISH ADVENTURE by Helen Dzhermolinska 12
DANCING CAN BE DANGEROUS! by Milton Feher 16
THE MAN BEHIND THE COSTUME—the designer, Russel Hartley 20
THE NEW NATIONAL BALLET IN SWEDEN by Holger Lundbergh 22
From Oklahoma to Monte Carlo: Rosella Hightower by Lillian Moore 24
DANCE INSPIRES THE PARIS COUTURIERS by Golda G. Antignac 25
THE AGENT: FRIEND OR FIEND? by George Leon 26
BALLET BALLADS: A CRITIQUE by Vincenzo Celli 28
INTRODUCTION TO BALLET HISTORY by A. E. Twysden 29
REVIEWER'S STAND 36

ON THE COVER

Tiger Lily, from ballet of the same name by Helen Tamiris in the musical, "INSIDE U.S.A.", sits triumphant under the nose of Justice, while her counsel, Dr. Zilmore, talks the jury into getting Lily out of range of the hot seat for a murder rap. This Broadway sensation has moved dancers VALERIE BETTIS and ERIC VICTOR overnight into the national glamour sweepstakes.

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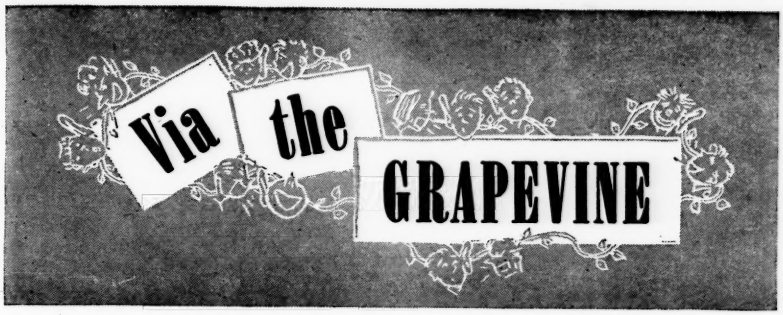

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CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN DANCE FESTIVAL at New London, Conn. in AUGUST

Dates have been set for a festival at Connecticut College which promises to be the most important representation to date of the work of leading choreographers and dancers who are exponents of contemporary American dance. Such dancers as **Martha Graham** (and full company), **Jose Limon** and company, **Doris Humphrey** (as choreographer) and the **Dudley-Bales-Maslow** Company, among others, will be seen at the Palmer Auditorium.

There will be 11 performances, beginning August 13th-21. There will be no Sunday evening performances, but there will be matinees on Saturday, August 14, Sunday, August 15 and Saturday, August 21.

*

It appears fairly certain at this writing that the ballet of the Paris Opera will at long last come to America in September.

The passing of two friends is sadly noted: **ALEX GARD,** contributing editor of Dance Magazine, world famous cartoonist and friend of dance, died of heart failure in New York on June 1st. He was 48 years old. His famous caricatures of the theatrical world line the walls of Sardi's famous hostelry, as they have for many years. He was the author of a number of entertaining books of cartoons on ballet and ballet personalities such as *Ballet Laughs*, and the recent *Hollywood Off-Gard*. His last known published cartoon was published in the June issue of DANCE MAGAZINE, entitled "Some Money Lost in the Bamboo Valley". His many friends will miss a generous and gallant man. . . . Our other loss is that of **EVELYN HUBBELL,** whose passing on June 5th after a serious illness, marks the close of a real epoch in dancing teachers' history. Mrs. Hubbell was known and loved by every local and many distant ballroom dance teachers with whom she associated in a career of over 50 years. **Dance Magazine** offers its most profound sympathy to the family and friends of Mrs. Hubbell.

*

Mysterious tremors, followed by silence (by gentlemen's agreement) followed upon the change of ballet master at the Metropolitan Opera, where **Edward Caton,** who has served five years, departed this month, to be succeeded by **Aubrey Hitchins.** Mr. Caton has accepted no commitments until the end of the summer, but will continue to teach at Ballet Arts. . . . **George Balanchine** leaves July 16th by Air France for Monte Carlo where he is to stage two new ballets for the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo. The Marquis de Cuevas has also engaged **Antonio Cobos** to do two new ballets for the company; she flies to France on July 9th. . . . **Fred Danieli** and a cast of four, including **Virginia Barnes, Venus Bush, Evelyn Shaw** and **Charles Laskey,** were involved in a little ballet impromptu put on for the unveiling of the Ford '49 at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York June 10-15. . . . Although there has been no official declaration the chances are pretty good that **Jocelyn Vollmar,** San Francisco's own, will go to Ballet Theatre as a soloist shortly. . . . The **San Francisco Civic Ballet** seems to be wallowing in the doldrums this season; after such a brilliant takeoff, too. They have had to cancel their Hollywood Bowl and New York engagements. Rumour puts it down to over-management. . . . Concert dancers, of whatever technic or style, and choreographers of same, who wish to submit their work to **Theatre Dance, Inc.** for an early Fall New York showing, should contact the office of the secretary at 1329 Avenue of the Americas, New York City. TD announces that its first Fall studio program will be held September 12 at the Studio Theatre and that a preview will be held on August 15 at the Dance Players Studio. . . . A two time look at the June performances of **Ana Maria** and her **Ballet Espanol** at Carnegie Hall confirms this reporter's fear that the company of the same name, now in Spain, headed by **Pilar Lopez** and **José Greco,** will never have anything to worry about by way of comparison. Ana Maria distinguished herself chiefly by virtue of the speed with which she changed from one costume to another, all within the space of the 15 minutes which it takes to unfold *Amor Brujo*. . . . Another Spanish dancer, whose debut was far more gratifying, and less ballyhooed, was **Elena Imaz,**

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whose first appearance at Carnegie Hall on a Pops Concert was one of the few bright moments of the 'pop' season. She displayed an honest virtuosity, ingratiating style and personal beauty without the benefit of fanfare or publicity. She was accompanied in group numbers by two Americans, **Louise Ferrand** and **Wayne Lamb**, one of which, a *Tarantella* arranged by **Valentina Belova**, was exceptional for strength and humour.

*

SUMMER CLASSROOM EVENTS

Eric Victor, the bearded tap-dancing sensation of *Inside U.S.A.* returns for a summer spell to the faculty of the **Ballet Arts School.** . . . **Eileen O'Connor** is accepting pupils for a special professional class which is to start August 16th, featuring a 3 point program: technic, flexing, *pointes*. . . . The Music School of the Henry Street Settlement, 8 Pitt Street, New York, announces a course in Modern Dance to begin in September. **Alwin Nikolais** will head the Dance Department, with **Hanya Holm** as Advisory Head. . . . The 30 year tradition of excellence of the **Ernest Belcher** School in Los Angeles will be furthered by the change of name (and partnership) effective this month, when the school becomes the **Belcher-DeRea Dance Studios.** Al and Harriet DeRea, who have been associated with Mr. Belcher for seven years, have been an inspiration to the students of the school these many years.

*

Dance in Meadow and Countryside

The heat has all but driven every performing dancer clear out of town and into the forest. Among the notable events to take place in the countryside in July are the eight-week series of square dances and concerts at Meadow Hearth, the **Grace** and **Kurt Graff** farm near Hopkinton, N. H., beginning Saturday, July 10. The Graffs have remodeled a century-old farmhouse, built an outdoor stage and bingo: a summer festival series and art center. . . . **Todd Bollender.** faculty member of the Fokine School, and danseur with Ballet Society, has jumped the gun on the summer concerts with a performance of his new work, *Moonlight Sonata*, and an old work, *Commedia Balletica*, performed at South Ferry, Conn. with ballerinas **Maria Tallchief, Mary Ellen Moylan, Marie Jeanne, Tanaquil LeClerq, Beatrice Tompkins** and **Ruthanna Boris** in attendance. This is to be the first of several Mr. Bollender plans to present.

United Air Lines

Ballet family flies to Paris: David Lichine, his wife, Tatiana Riabouchinska and daughter Tanya, age 2, board a plane at Los Angeles for flight to New York en route to Paris. The fourth person's name is just "Teddy Bear".

José Greco, on the eve of his severance from Ballet Espanol, received an ovation at the Teatro Fontalba in Madrid, such as has not been remembered there in 20 years. Madrid is the scene of a recent appearance of Col. de Basil's Original Ballet Russe and **David Lichine** and **Tanya Riabouchinska** and **Jose Greco** and his wife, **Nila Amparo**, were the guests of **Col. de Basil** at lunch in one of Madrid's famous hotels recently. . . . **Vicente Escudero** announces that his book, called "Mi Baile" (My Dance) is soon to be published. . . . **Lillian Moore**, European correspondent of DANCE Magazine, who has spent a year dancing there with an Army USO unit, on the eve of her return to America, was accorded a signal honour. She was invited to appear in performance with **Harald Kreutzberg** on the International

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There was *Changing Moment* with its velvet-clad figures (Billie Kirpich and Elizabeth Sherbon) in a duet of pose and convention, dashed from their pattern by a whirlwind spirit, and left shattered and motionless by the impact.

And there was *En Pelerinage, A Medieval Tapestry.* No stiff mannequin of warp and woof was Miss Erdman's richly garbed tapestry girl. She was real and gay and minxy. She flirted and danced and prayed with a quaint, full-blooded femininity.

Although it does not necessarily form a trend, Miss Erdman often manifests a feeling for nature that is particularly refreshing in these days of soul probe and class struggle. Some of this quality even permeates her personal movement style with its free arms, its refined hands, and the gracious set of head and neck. Only her legs could be more precisely articulated. But that is indeed a small point in so gifted a performer.

Eve Gentry, unlike Miss Erdman, is often grim and bitter. Her endless solo, *Magnolia Ladyhood* (with a lovely rippling musical score by Edward Mattos), is meant to be a satire on the decadent southern women whose very dubious honor is protected whenever a Negro lonely people. It is frustrated, it is unhappy, and yet it is somehow courageous and gallant.

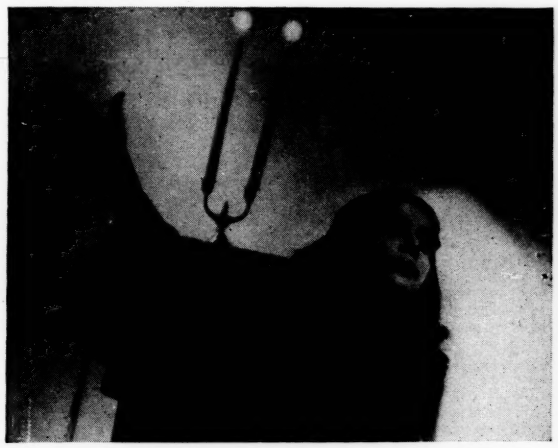
Goodbye, My Johnny is our favorite of Miss Gentry's solos. Here she does not over-dance, nor does she constantly search for startling movement. She uses her fine technique to create a simple, poignant portrait of a woman whose man has gone to war.

Since Joseph Gifford's dances for himself and Mary Anthony were not premieres, space does not permit us to accord them the added discussion they richly deserve. Suffice it to say that *The Unsleeping City,* which at first seemed fragmentary, is in reality a powerful and imaginative set of variations on biting Garcia Lorca themes. And Mr. Gifford's solo for Mary Anthony in *The Pursued* gave her the opportunity to contribute one of the most exciting bits of solo dance in the whole Festival.

Pearl Primus's solos were repetitions from her recent concert at the YM-YWHA.

We like to think of all the foregoing as a rich and satisfying meal to be topped off by a special dessert in the form of Hadassah, who remains one of the most dazzling personalities the New Dance Group has ever sponsored.

Marcus Blechman



Hadassah in an interpretation of an exalted, religious dance, "Shuvi Nafshi" (Return, Oh My Soul), based on biblical and Hebraic themes.

Erich Hartmann

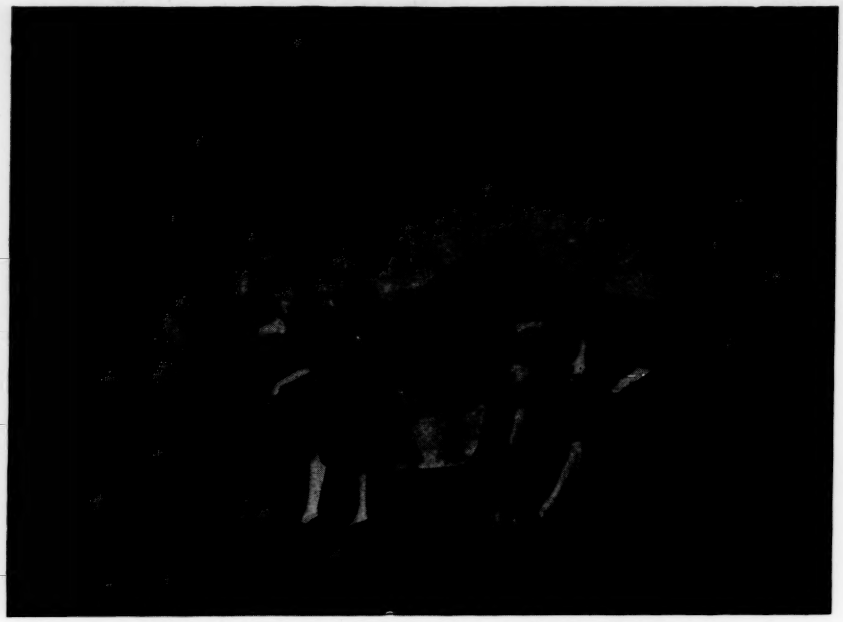
Mary Anthony and Joseph Gifford in "The Unsleeping City" based on poem of the same name by Garcia-Lorca.

is lynched. And what an excellent theme that is! Yet from it she has drawn an attenuated, psycho-neurotic study. It is almost impossible to tell where she is depicting outward behavior and where she has gone beneath the surface. She has been far more interested in creating strange movements than in really understanding the character and its dramatic implications.

But when she draws upon subject matter that evidently has some vein of connection in her own personal experience, Miss Gentry proves herself to be a communicative and appealing artist. *Lonesome World* (Bernie Asbel) is a rapid succession of dashings and elevations set against a slow, melancholy little song about

She has now added another jewel to her diadem of exquisitely performed solos in Hindu Idiom. With the aid of flute, narrator, and recorded finale, she has created *Fable,* the story of a king's search for peace. The dance has none of the aspects of "Now I'll tell you a story" that western interpreters of Hindu dance love to foist upon us. It is mature and very beautiful and proves that one can bring out all the modern implications of an ancient art form without at all popularizing or debasing it.

In the inch or two of space still left to us we have our choice of listing the innumerable repertory selections that were performed—of describing *(Please turn to page 31)*



The curtain rises cn the ballet, Pictures of Goya (Argentinita) with dancers Nila Amparo, Jose Greco, Pilar Lopez and Manolo Vargas standing inside the frame.

PAGES FROM A SPANISH ADVENTURE

Gyenes, Madrid *Palau*

Jose Greco in two popular roles, as a Madrileno dandy of the Nineties, and as the Miller in Three-Cornered Hat.

Stage portrait of Nila Amparo and Jose Greco taken during performance of Pictures of Goya.

HELEN DZHERMOLINSKA ***relates the story of Brooklyn-bred JOSE GRECO and NILA AMPARO, the Americans who are acclaimed as Spain's greatest dancers, by SPAIN itself***

SOME twelve years ago, a young hopeful used to take the long journey from Brooklyn to Helene Veola's 59th Street studio in Manhattan twice a week, to learn how to be a Spanish dancer. She was accompanied faithfully wherever she went, as is every proper young lady of similar family and antecedents, by a chaperon—in this case, her younger brother. The best laid plans of mice and men being what they are, the sister grew up to be the famous soprano, Norina Greco, some time heard at the Metropolitan Opera House. And the chaperon brother? José Greco, a kid from Brooklyn with the blood of a probable thousand years of Mediterranean-Italian ancestry coursing through his veins, is today that paradox among paradoxes—the non-Spaniard acclaimed as the greatest living Spanish dancer in Spain—by Spain itself.

To fully appreciate this evaluation by Spain, one has to first fully realize the intensity of nationalism in Spain, a peculiar nationalism amounting to a frenzy, or a religion. A foreigner interpret the crystalline, fanatic soul of Spain through its dance? Never! Well—almost never . . . in fact—maybe. This happens when a Greco comes along to dispute the veracity of this Spanish irrationality. How has he done this?

Absolute dedication to an art as demanding as dance is, in any case, a triumph of will over matter. When it is complicated by a factor as powerful as hispanophilia, this dedication amounts to a course as inexorable as the course of the planets around the Sun. "El" Greco *had* to become what he is.

The boy whom Veola's analytical eye told her was the *genuine* dancer, had to struggle against accident of geography (a formidable one for the true hispanophile-dancer), against background (the necessity for making an immediate livelihood) and the need for transplantation to the home of the soul (to Spain, in his own case).

GRECO'S career as a dancer has been curiously affected by his relation to the late Argentinita, a dancer whose art evoked a pastel, period Spain given to few to interpret. This gifted artist, whose death in 1945 robbed the world of a rare personality, saw José Greco dance in a Broadway night club in 1938 and forthwith offered him a place high in the dance world, as her partner. He had to refuse the privilege because he was under contract elsewhere for another year to come. This was a mere two years after his first dancing lesson. His dancing then had vitality and animal grace, but it did not have the tempered artistry he has since acquired.

But it was another dancer, herself still in an artistic cocoon, who saw him first and realized that here was potentiality. It was Nora Kaye, then an unknown who was a soloist with the Hippodrome Opera Company, who saw José in the Veola studio and made a proposition to the Hippodrome management. These worthies had declined to go to the expense of two soloists, so she proposed that she share her solo spot *and* her salary with José, a gesture very seldom made by solo dancers. And so— José made his debut in a *pas de deux* with Nora Kaye in the ballet for the opera *Carmen* in 1937.

In 1941 he finally did join forces with Argentinita after her second request, and for four years danced and toured the country with her company, learning, practicing, coming within the sphere of influence of Argentinita and finally, maturing and outgrowing it, no mean feat for a youngster exposed to a personality as positive as that of Argentinita. This maturity had become increasingly noticeable in those last years before her death; in fact, he was undergoing the growing pains, the inevitable metamorphosis which overtakes the dancer who is not satisfied with mere interpretation. Already, in 1945, he felt creative forces so strongly conflicting with his fixed position as a dancer that he was beginning to dabble in choreography, a rich, satisfying form, evocative of Spain and its complex character, but not bound by the conventionalities of Spanish dance forms. This is the direction he took even then, and it is today underscored by his successes as a choreographer in this medium, in the company in which he and Pilar Lopez, Argentinita's sister, organized shortly after their arrival in Spain.

For whe Argentinita passed away, it was Greco who accompanied the heartbroken sister to Spain with the remains of her beloved sister. Superficially, this journey was undertaken out of simple humanity; it was an act of chivalry. But under the surface the real meaning of the journey to Spain becomes apparent. It was a pilgrimage. Greco was looking for that shrine which the spiritual and artistic pilgrim *must* find in order to be *creative*. In the mores and attitude of Spain and its life he found it — in the Spain of an age-old, mystic, violent, fanatic national culture, in that Spain which is the proud, articulate, beautiful, worshipping, suffering, intensely Iberian phenomenon that it has ever been. This Spain exists through changes of kings, tyrants, epochs, cultures, religions. There is something in the fey, brooding air that perpetually breathes this mystic beauty and violence, the something with which the dancer José Greco has found that *rapport* which is the difference between the average dancer of Spanish or other national dances and the artist who in his own body is capable of faithfully, brilliantly evoking for an audience the whole inner life and culture of a people.

THIS *rapport* has been the force which has determined Greco's success as a dancr and choreographer in Spain, but it is naturally not the whole story.

The repertory of the Argentinita company and its decors, orchestrations, etc. became the property of Pilar Lopez after the death of her sister. For a company of Spanish dancers, this repertory, consisting of such ballets as *Cafe de Chinitas, Old Madrid, Cappricio Espagnole,*

Pages From a SPANISH ADVENTURE

continued

Pictures of Goya, Bolero, etc. was the nearest thing in theatre to that of the big ballet companies, in that it was not merely a collection of national dances, but a repertory of large-scale ballets, in effect, a valuable theatrical property.

It was upon the continued insistence of Greco and the pleas of cultural groups in Spain that Pilar Lopez finally submerged her grief and decided to return to the stage with this repertory, the first time in a decade for her since her last appearance on a Spanish stage; for Greco, the first time ever. There was some understandable nervousness in the re-organized company when it gave its first performance in Madrid on June 9, 1946. But Madrid, and subsequently Barcelona, Sevilla, Cordoba, Granada, Cadiz, Valencia, San Sebastian, Bilbao and other cities indicated their frenzied partiality toward the company, and especially to "El" Greco.

In the words of the headlines of some feature articles which have since appeared in the American metropolitan press,

"TWO LATINS FROM BROOKLYN HAVE THE SPANIARDS SHOUTING OLE!"
"BROOKLYN TEAM WINS — IN SPAIN"!

The *other* half indicated in the foregoing headlines refers to none other than Mrs. Greco. In the best romantic tradition, this union took place after a courtship involving cross-Atlantic journeys, cables, parental opposition (finally weakened by the determination of the lovers) telephone calls daily from Madrid to Brooklyn and back, in effect, a plot which thickened and had a happy ending.

Mrs. Greco is a girl, who, like her husband, had the forethought to come from that most colourful of all geographical corners, Brooklyn, which, of any place in America, is almost as famous as its sister borough across the bay, and has already become a legend, thanks to its rich vocabulary, interesting regional behaviour, the presence of the Dodgers and Coney Island, to say nothing of the Navy Yard, and the immortality forced upon it by the sensational "Arsenic and Old Lace".

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Greco came from Brooklyn deliberately. The parents of both settled there, having come, the Grecos from Italy, via Argentina, the Peters from Lebanon, a recently liberated limb of the Syrian state. Mrs. Greco is the former Lucille Peters, a beauty in the Arabian Nights tradition, who comes from this Syro-Lebanese family resident in Brooklyn. She is a shy and retiring personality who glows happily in the reflected aura of her husband's popularity and success; she cares more about his success than hers, although she is well on her way to becoming a distinguished dancer in the Spanish idiom.

This is, in itself, a curiosity, because until she came to Madrid at the request of Pilar Lopez in the fall of 1945, she had been a student and a performer in the Hindu dance; in fact, was one of the leading dancers in the La Meri company, where she was a great favourite. She has also been associated as choreographer and leading dancer with a concert group headed by Wasantha Wana Singh, leading exponent of Hindu music in America.

Both Pilar Lopez and José Greco had great faith in her talent and adaptability and events have borne out their faith in her. Her Spanish dancing, after three years in Spain, has a lyric feeling about it which can best be compared to the gentility and gentleness which made Argentinita famous (for the last two years she has been dancing all the great roles danced by Argentinita). This lyric style has become progressively more earthy, but never the flamenco earthiness; it is a combination of the earthy and the classic, always underscored by that spiritual repose and serenity which is genuinely Spanish, and so hard for a non-Spaniard to achieve in dance.

Mrs. Greco, who is known professionally in Spain as Nila Amparo, has found not only her romance and romantic wedding, but also her association with the dance and her life in Spain a profoundly emotional and satisfying exprience. Her attitude toward the dance and the theatre is one of humility and learning. Her reward is her popularity with Spanish audiences, second only to that of her husband.

This pair, as well as other members of the company, are some of the hardest-working (and best paid) people in the theatre. They give two performances a night, one at 7:30 and one at 11:00, and often after performances take part in after-theatre flamenco parties, which are usually endurance contests in song and dance lasting up to dawn and later. Their days have been a succession of study and research in studio and in the highways and byways of Spain, in the little-known corners where gypsies and peasants congregate to perform their own dances. They are in continual movement and understandably in need of a vacation, but their brief excursion to Italy and France last year made them restless for Spain and activity.

The Ballet Espanol, as it is called, is today the biggest money-maker in the Spanish theatre. It has appeared at as high as a $5.00 top at the famous Teatros Romea in Barcelona, the San Fernando in Seville, the Espanol in Madrid, the San Carlos in Lisbon and numerous others.

Natives and foreigners in Madrid and elsewhere when queried on Spanish life and politics, consistently and invariably remark that you *should* see the Ballet Espanol, if you haven't already.

The repertory of the company has been augmented by new works choreographed by José Greco, such as *Cana y Farruca, Sentimiento,* a pas de deux for himself and Amparo, *Triana, Polo* and a re-staging of the *Three-Corered Hat* (de Falla) with himself as the Miller. These and other new works not yet staged will be produced by Greco independently of the Ballet Espanol when he forms his own company, later this year. *(Please turn to page 32)*

An outdoor stage somewhere in Spain. The Ballet Espanol has traveled extensively in Spain, appeared in large and small theatres. These five members of a Cuadro Flamenco are Nila Amparo, Manolo Vargas, Elvira Real, Jose Greco and Pilar Lopez.

Jose Greco, left, and the three Heredia (gypsy) Brothers, taken in the wings of the San Carlos is Lisbon before a performance of Sentimiento.

Nila Amparo and Jose Greco in a performance of Bolero (Argentinita-Ravel).

Postural defects and imbalance may bring YOUR

Dancing Can Be DANGEROUS!

"DANCING is dangerous", the doctor said. "Give it up and perhaps your knees will get better." If you stop for a while and your knees feel stronger so that you try it again, your knees will soon stop you." The doctor drew a picture for me. "Dancers dropping into a knee bend as they do repeatedly in jumping punish their knee cartilage till it is worn down. Cartilage does not renew itself. So you see there is nothing you can do but, GIVE UP DANCING!"

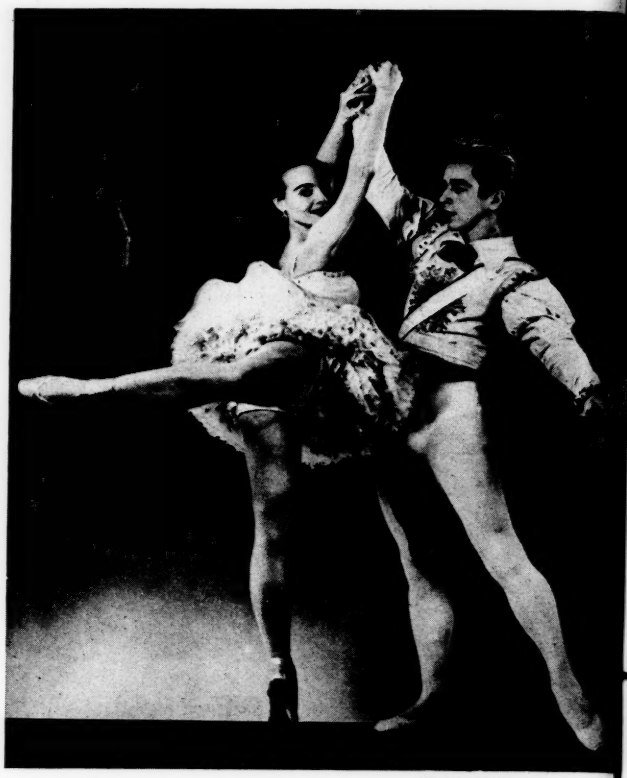
I walked out of his office thinking of my future. Not to dance meant a slow death. To live without the thrill of jumping into the air, of crouching tight against the ground, of twisting and turning, of feeling and thinking with my whole body, was not to live at all. To wake each day and remember that I was not to dance today or any day. That the dancing I loved so had crippled me, that the very intensity of my love had proven fatal for me.

For twenty years I had performed acrobatics, tap, modern, and ballet. In each my skill was sufficient to earn roles in Broadway productions. During an engagement in Olsen and Johnson's *Sons O'Fun* I doubled in the Radio City Rainbow Room and rehearsed daily for both. This schedule resulted in a knee condition so aggravated that just walking became painful. Over a period of a year, all treatment proved unsuccessful. Successive specialists advised rest; warned me not to expect permanent improvement; advised that I give up dancing.

I liked dancing, I couldn't afford to stop working, so I continued to study the problem on my own. There were a few guide posts: Really fine dancers rarely injured themselves. George M. Cohan was a strong and wonderful dancer at sixty-one. Martha Graham, past fifty, is at the height of her career. At seventy, Bill Robinson is more skillful with each succeeding season. It wasn't they who continuously suffered strained knees and sore backs. It was the lesser lights who were straining to copy them.

What did these performers have in common? Each had a body that was remarkably straight. I looked at myself and concluded that it was not excessive dancing alone that had caused my painful knee condition. My entire body was out of balance. My weight rested mostly on my left leg. My shoulders drooped, I had sway back, flat feet, and, like most people, an *unsuspected curvature of the spine.* The resulting imbalance meant that I had to spend prodigious strength learning new steps. Even when the routine was learned perfectly my knees continued to strain because they could not share the weight equally.

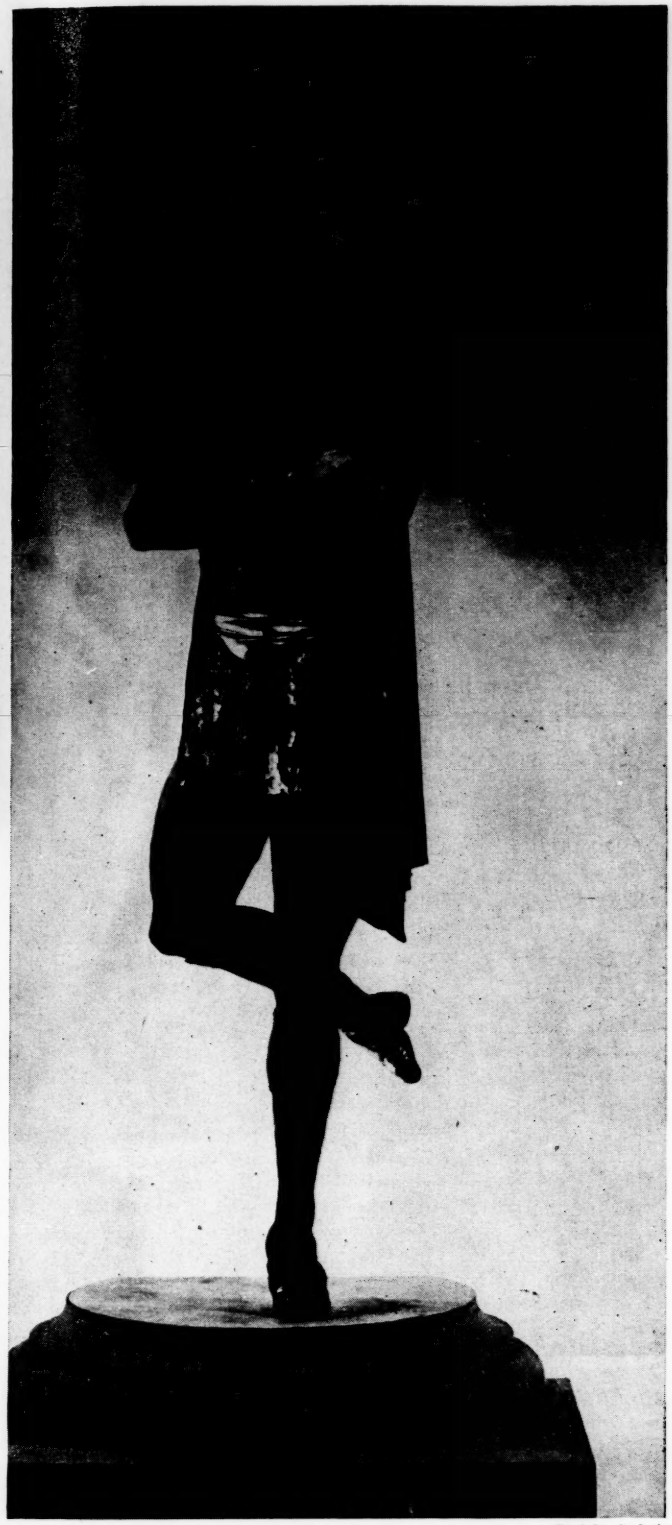
Gradually I evolved a technic for straightening my body. In exact proportion to success in straightening, my knees improved. Now that good posture is habitual, my knees feel as strong as if I had never injured them, although I dance and teach dancing at least six hours a day. With better posture I perform at the first or second attempt steps which had eluded me despite prolonged effort.



Walter E. Owen

The same dancer, OLGA SUAREZ, partnered by Nicolas Magallanes, applying the Feher method in actual performance. Note the supple line of the torso, the lack of strain in the lines of the shoulder and neck, the effortless elevation of the leg.

The author, MILTON FEHER, instructs OLGA SUAREZ in his method of relaxation techniques for ballet. ⟶



Dwight Godwin

one shoulder was higher than the other, one hip protruded more. one leg turned in more. It was no wonder these errors added up to a sore knee! In *pliés* the protruding hip throws the weight unevenly upon one knee. In *battements* the turned in leg drops the body weight to strain the supporting arch. In *port de bras* the uneven shoulders keep the arms off balance.

Obvious as these postural faults now seemed, they had never before received the attention they required. The medical authorities she had consulted had not even mentioned them. They had all taken it for granted that unreasonable strain and injury were a natural part of dancing. Jane's experience with improved posture supports my opinion that theatrical dancing can be healthful instead of harmful. In the three years since her first lessons all weakness and disability in her knee had disappeared. Preparing for a solo concert this fall Miss Brown dances an average of six hours a day.

John Arnold was about to give up dancing because of persistent back aches. Besides this condition he felt that his progress was unreasonably slow. In studying his particular problem it was observed that muscular rigidity increased just before each motion. The cause was found in a faulty carriage of the spine. At the very moment straightness was essential (as for instance in a pirouette) John's spine would bend. Not having been aware of this fundamental, most of his weary hours of practice had been wasted.

The prime importance of this simple fact is indicated by the fact that whenever his spine is straight all his steps are secure. Within one month of practicing in this way John's back became free of pain.

One evening before a performance of *Music In My Heart*, Miss Olga Suarez, prima ballerina, felt too ill to go on. She had been ill all day, but had hoped against hope that show time would find her better. Having come to the theater to give her a lesson, I urged her to try some *barre* work before calling her understudy.

Very gamely, Miss Suarez, began her *pliés*. They were weak and shaky—too shaky to go on. Sitting down we reviewed the principles of relaxation on which she had spent so much practice. Automatically her placement improved. Trying the *pliés* again we found them stronger.

Gently and slowly we continued the *barre* and *port de bras*. Whatever the exercise was we made sure it was done as easily as possible. One could practically see the tension subside. Within twenty minutes Miss Suarez was jumping in perfect comfort. She danced that night as if she had never been ill.

The season before a similar incident had occurred. Miss Suarez had come to my studio for coaching on a routine she was to dance that night at Copacabana. Once there a muscle condition made it *(Please turn to page 32)*

IGOR YOUSKEVITCH, that phenomenon, the naturally-relaxed ballet dancer. The perfect balance and alignment of the head, torso and legs illustrate the perfection which can be attained through study of relaxation techniques. This photo of Mr. Youskevitch in Apollo (Balanchine-Stravinsky), a Ballet Theatre production.

The Man Behind the Costume

Some notes

on designer

RUSSELL HARTLEY

of

SAN FRANCISCO

Costume design by Hartley for the corps de ballet in "Swan Lake", created for the San Francisco Civic Ballet.

A Hartley design worn by Jocelyn Vollmar as Thisbe in William Christensen's "Pyramus and Thisbe".

Romaine

COSTUME design is, at best, an exacting occupation, a form of artistic expression which must be aware at all times of the needs of the dancer, the laws of theatrical effectiveness, and must march in step with decor, lighting, choreography, and esthetic mood.

Russell Hartley, twenty-two year old designer for the San Francisco Civic Ballet, as easel painter, former dancer, and life long balletomane, is equipped to attack the problems of costume design with many weapons.

He is especially grateful to his working knowledge of costume construction, which enables him to indulge his love of detail without creating an undanceable costume.

Mr. Hartley has discovered that each ballet must be approached on the basis of its own problems, that generalizations are safe only when they are concerned with such matters as the specific effects of lights on various fabrics and colors, with the delicate pastel effects which can be obtained by alternating a colored layer with a white layer in a tutu skirt, with the necessity of integrating the various costumes within one ballet, the desirability of repetition and variation on a few color and design motifs.

Mr. Hartley has created seven ballets, in addition to divertissements for the Thorson and Mimi Kagen Dance Groups. And only in the designs for three Gilbert and Sullivan operas, has he been able to concentrate solely on stage effect, disregarding the peculiar demands of dance costume.

Dance costumes must be sturdy. At the end of a performance they are generally soaked. All seams must be stitched three to four times, as protection against the stress of movement. They have to be fluid, to move with the dancer. They must be as light and secure as possible.

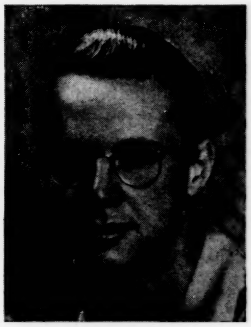
Having learned his work during the war years, he appreciates the stimulating effect that necessary experimentation and substitution can have.

At a time when feather boning was somewhat difficult to procure, he used piano wiring on a crinoline base in the hoop of a ballet skirt. He has found it to be more satisfactory for this particular use. It has greater flexibility and sturdiness. In none of his costumes has it ever broken; but should this occur, repair would be a simple matter.

Mr. Hartley is most vehement in the belief that the morale of the dancer is infinitely helped by a costume that retains its beauty under close scrutiny. In those for his current task, a revival of "Swan Lake", he has introduced innovations in head dresses and detail, while maintaining this ballet's traditional mood. The bodices, embroidered and embossed in silver, and set with rhinestones, should afford their wearers much satisfaction. Wally Lane, of the "Starving Artist",

Joaquin Felsch

Russell Hartley, the Man Behind the Costume—in the Mother Buffoon costume from "The Nutcracker".



Russell Hartley, a camera study by Karletta of San Francisco.

is in charge of costume execution.

It was Rosella Hightower who discovered the possibilities of his satiric art portfolio, *Henry VIII*, as basis for ballet. *Henry VIII* was presented by the Markova-Dolin Company at the Metropolitan Opera House during the fall of 1947. Miss Hightower did the choreography and Hartley modified the designs for dancing presentation.

In this ballet, the spurious dignity of the wives was indicated by an unexpected use of tights to accompany a straight-faced adaptation of Holbein paintings from the waist up.

The ornate headpieces and lavish jewelry presented constructional difficulties. The lame and velvet headpieces, on a foundation of padded buckram, were kept light, their essential weight being concentrated in the stones. For security, they were fitted with wide pieces of elastic, with flesh colored chin straps, glued with spirit gum at the loose edges, and climaxed with hat pins.

The illusion of heavy, stone encrusted, gold chains was achieved through the use of lengths of ribbon, crocheted in non-tarnishable gold, with the necessary patterns. Set with stones, sewn on flesh colored net, they were virtually weightless, and afforded the dancer complete freedom.

An earlier work was a revival of *The Nutcracker* for the San Francisco Ballet. The first act costumes were evolved after saturation in the paintings of Ingres and David. The Chinese costumes offered opportunity for one of Mr. Hartley's favorite practices, fabric painting. Masks were applied with gold leaf powder.

At least one costume was the result of something approximating an engineering feat. The Mother Buffoon sequence had never been performed in the United States, because of difficulties in the creation and handling of the requisite costume. Through *(Please turn to page 35)*

The New National Ballet in SWEDEN

by HOLGER LUNDBERGH

Studio Jarlas, Stockholm

Teddy Rhodin as "John" in the ballet "Johannesnatten", unveiled at the Royal Opera House in Stockholm on April 3, 1948. Note the stylized decors typical of the Dalecarlian.

A NEW Swedish ballet has been presented in Stockholm. Called "Johannesnatten" ("Eve of John"), it created a minor sensation at its premiere April 3 at the Royal Opera. The idea to the story was formulated by Rune Lindström. The music was composed by Gunnar de Frumerie, one of Sweden's most noted young modern composers, the choreography was handled—masterly, according to the papers—by George Gé, a Swedish dance instructor whose real name is Georg Grönfeldt, and the settings and costumes were by Stellan Mörner. They, too, received generous praise from the critics.

The story, in four scenes, gives flashes of the life of St. John the Baptist and his meeting with Salome. The latter was interpreted by Brita Appelgren, *premiere danseuse* of the Royal Opera, and John's part was taken by Teddy Rhodin, *premiere danseur* at the same institution. Herodias was done with dramatic skill by Maj. Lundfeldt and Herod was played with juicy gusto by Sven Tropp, a former ballet dancer at the Opera and a veteran of a family that has given Sweden many of its most talented male and female dancers. As "Gammel-Jerk" (in reality "the evil one," or the Devil) appeared Julius Mengarelli.

The story is a slim and fairly unimportant one, taking many liberties both with religious and antique history. It tells, in broad strokes, of John's journey through life,

of his encounter with Salome and Herod, and of his steadfastness in refusing her charm and advances, despite the sly aiding done by the Devil. In the end, far from having his head served on a silver salver, the adamant and strong-willed John triumphs over evil, and Salome is made to see the error of her ways.

What makes the ballet so interesting and important, however, is not only the brilliant acting, dancing, music, costumes, settings, and direction which all combined to make a striking and original choreographic pattern of the many-faceted ballet. It is, in the deepest sense, a national ballet, and the first one of its kind ever put on in Sweden. To undersand the word "national," a flash-back parenthesis is necessary.

In the early 19th century there lived in certain central Swedish provinces, especially Dalecarlia and Härjedalen, many self-taught rural artists. By profession they may have been house or carriage painters, who amused themselves in their spare time with work of a more artistic

Studio Jarlas, Stockholm

The principal dancers in "Johannesnatten" (George Ge, choreographer) are Maj. Lundfeldt as "Herodias", Teddy Rhodin as "John" and Sven Tropp as "Herod".

nature. In the farm houses, which were mostly small and made out of logs, there was little room for pictures, even if some could have been procured. However, it was a custom to decorate the walls with paintings of linen, which were displayed on holidays, at weddings, birthdays, etc. When the festivities were over, they were for the most part again rolled up and put away in the gaily decorated wooden chests. On these cloths the local artists depicted Biblical scenes. There was always a Bible in every cottage, and from the vast richness of the Holy Writ the painters found ample motifs. However, not having traveled far—if at all—from their home parish, they clothed the Biblical figures in costumes and uniforms of their own day.

(Please turn to page 31)

Photographs and story by courtesy of the American-Swedish News Exchange

Studio Jarlas, Stockholm

Julius Mengarelli danced the part of the Evil One (Gammel-Jerk) in "Johannesnatten".

Brita Appelgren as "Salome" and Sven Tropp as "Herod" in the ballet "Johannesnatten".

Studio Jarlas, Stockholm

FROM OKLAHOMA TO MONTE CARLO

the odyssey of ROSELLA HIGHTOWER

an account by LILLIAN MOORE

IT WAS the first really warm day of spring in Monte Carlo. Flowers were opening everywhere, and there was a heady perfume in the air as we sat on the terrace at Pasquier's and sipped black coffee. Rosella Hightower apologized for her lateness—she had been enjoying the first sunshine on the beach, between a strenuous orchestra rehearsal and an even more strenuous performance.

"In a way, it seems strange to come back here as a ballerina," she said, "because this is where I got my very first job as a dancer. It was in Massine's company, back in 1938. What a fabulous company that was! We had Danilova, Markova, Slavenska, Krassovska, Nini Theilade—oh, I can hardly remember all the stars! And Freddy Franklin was just beginning with Massine, too. It was here that *Gaité Parisienne* had its first performance."

Gently I reminded Rosella that we had come to talk about her own career.

"Oh, I wasn't even a member of the company, then," she laughed. "I had auditioned for Massine back in St. Louis, while he was touring with the De Basil company. At that time I was still studying in Kansas City with my first teacher, Dorothy Perkins.

2

I traveled all the way to St. Louis to dance for Massine."

"And did he offer you a contract right away?"

"Oh, no! But he was very encouraging, and he suggested that if I were really serious about dancing, perhaps I would like to study with his company in Monte Carlo during the summer. Then, if there were an opening later on—"

"So when did you actually join the Ballet Russe?"

"That same summer, just before they went to London. Nina Stroganova accepted an engagement with Mordkin in New York, and that made a vacancy. Massine asked me to fill it."

Thinking of the brilliant reputation which Rosella Hightower has made in Europe this year, it seemed almost incredible that she had begun her career just ten short years ago, in such an humble fashion. Since she made her debut in Paris last autumn, as prima ballerina of the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo, her success has been little short of sensational.

Following her most recent appearances in Paris one critic, after comparing her to Pavlova and Spessivtseva, wrote:

"The exceptional charm of Mlle. Hightower lies in her absolute purity . . . She gives the impression not of becoming, but of being. She does not interpret the music of Chopin, she is that music. If her appearance upon the stage immediately produces that amazed silence which seized the contemporaries of De Musset when Malibran began to sing, it is certain that she owes part of her power to her prodigious technique . . . But what is most attractive about her is that all her movements have the aerial quality of flight . . ."

Although Rosella Hightower's European triumph came to her overnight, it was the result of slow years of training and gradual development from an ensemble dancer to small soloist to star.

1

"I remained for four years with the Ballet Russe, touring constantly," she reminisced, "It was with this company that I danced my first solo parts. Before I left, I even had the chance to do *Coppélia*, one of my favorite roles."

In 1943 Rosella joined the Ballet Theatre as one of its leading soloists. Her big chance came when Markova fell ill and was forced to undergo an operation. Rosella Hightower replaced the English star in all her roles, such as *Swan Lake, Sylphides*, and the Pas de Deux from *The Nutcracker*, during an entire New York season. Press and audiences began to realize that the young dancer from Oklahoma was a ballerina in the making.

Although Rosella Hightower has danced in ballet exclusively, her experience has not been confined to the great international companies. For one season she toured with Massine's little "Highlights of the Ballet Russe" troupe, and just before leaving for Europe, last summer, she danced in Central America and the islands of the Caribbean in a miniature group headed by Markova and Dolin.

In the spring of 1947, while appearing at the Metropolitan Opera House with De Basil's company, she was called upon once again to substitute for Alicia Markova. This time it was in *Giselle*, one of the most taxing roles in ballet repertoire. She danced it, successfully, on just one day's notice. *Giselle* is now in the repertoire of the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo, and is one of the roles in which she appeared in Paris.

"But my favorite parts are almost always demi-caractère roles," she admitted, nibbling at a tempting bit of French pastry. "I love Danilova's parts in *Gaité Parisienne* and *Le Beau Danube*, and was thrilled when occasionally I had the chance to dance them, while I was still in the Ballet Russe. I wish that this company would revive Coppélia for me. I would like very much to dance it again now." *(Please turn to page 35)*

3

Some informals taken on the Riviera of the author with members of the Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo and by the author of Rosella Hightower, William Dollar and Yvonne Patterson. **(1)** *ROSELLA HIGHTOWER at Monte Carlo;* **(2)** *William Dollar rehearsing with Yvonne Patterson at Monte Carlo;* **(3)** *Luncheon party on a terrace overlooking the Mediterranean, left to right, counter-clockwise: Leda Auchutina (Mme. Eglevsky), Lillian Moore (the author), William Dollar choreographer and maitre de ballet of the company), Yvonne Patterson, and the two Andre Eglevskys, senior and junior.*

Dance Inspires the PARIS Couturiers

by GOLDA G. ANTIGNAC

IN THEIR eternal search for inspiration, the great fashion creators of Paris may find their ideas in ancient Greece or in modern Cuba, in the portrayal of a saint's folded gown on the facade of a cathedral or in the full swing of a peasant's wide skirt, in the rich colors of an old Van Dyke portrait or in the crude tones of a Riviera landscape. They may go back to days long before the Christian era or step back only a decade or two as they did this Spring.

But the relation between *haut couture* and the arts is one so intrinsicly intimate that to those looking upon a masterpiece of the dressmaking art in a Paris salon, paintings seem to have come to life and sculpture to move, as Pygmalion might have wished. And between the creative arts of *couture* and the dance there is a close indissoluble partnership, so that sometimes the eye of a great designer recalls some movement of the dance and translates it into fabric, sometimes he allows his fancy to have full swing and designs a costume which he imagines for a ballet performance, or again, intent upon the inner scene of a ballroom on a gala night, his fingers mold the gowns that he wishes to see worn there by lovely women, harmonizing movement with music.

Seeberger

1 CHRISTIAN DIOR calls this dance frock "Acapulco", the line copied from a bird's flight. It is of heavy white pique trimmed with a wide soutache insert and worn with a leather belt.

2 JACQUES HEIM calls this "Orage" (Tempest). All the fluidity of the classic Greek appears in this beautifully draped gown of pearl gray chiffon with its silver sequined matching scarf.

3 GERMAINE LECOMTE calls this "Loie Fuller" after the famous skirt dancer of a few generations ago. This ethereal evening frock of mousseline de soie in pastel tones of rose, mauve and blue, with the bodice embroidered in mother of pearl and silver sequins.

4 CARVEN calls this delicious gown "Hortense". 35 or 40 yards of printed organdie in a pattern of blue gentians and green leaves is combined with closely pleated ruffles of white organdie.

5 MOLYNEUX in his remarkable collection inspired by DEGAS and TOULOUSE-LAUTREC makes a picture gown for the ballroom of lemon faille with curtain drapery, the lace cape named "Visite", and velvet collar and streamers.

THE AGENT - Friend or Fiend?

AN AGENT. What is an agent? To paraphrase Gertrude Stein: an agent is an an agent, is an—agent, is an—agent. Outspoken dancers we have met have been known to fill in the blanks. If we did this, this magazine would be banned from the mails. Instead, let's dramatize your first meeting with an agent.

You walk up to the office door and there in large gilt letters is the legend (we use advisedly) "ARTISTS' REPRESENTATIVE"—"Honest Joe Percent, Mgr.". That's for you. So, in you walk with your scrapbook in your hand, hope in your breast, and your heart in your throat. The combined secretary and receptionist looks up from her latest film magazine to give you a look such as a duchess might bestow on the second footman who dropped the aspic on the guest of honour. You stammer, "I would like to see Mr. Percent."

"What for?"

Now that should be pretty obvious with a scrapbook as large as a sandwich board. You say,

"I want to see him about an engagement."

"I'm sorry (she looks it) but Honest Joe is in conference and can't be disturbed."

What she really means is that he is talking to himself in front of a mirror. Another time you are told he is reading a script. That script is called "Scratch Sheet" and he is spelling out difficult words, such as Hialeah and Santa Anita.

It takes a little time but you'll see him eventually. If not for yourself, for your grandchildren who have grown up in the meantime. But, let's say you have actually penetrated to the inner sanctum. You have gotten in because

(a) You are a beautiful man and have flashed a large toothy smile at the receptionist, or

(b) You are a girl and not as pretty as she thinks she is.

YOU HAVE ENTERED!

Joe Percent looks up. "What do you want, kid?"

"I'm a dancer and everybody back home in Slap Dash Junction told me I should go to New York and somebody gave me your name and said you could do something for me."

This comes out in a rush, but he has heard the same story so often that he can recite the whole piece by heart. So he says (I quote from an experience of mine)

"What kind of dancing do you do?"

"I'm a character dancer."

"What's that?"

When you get a remark like that, pick up your scrapbook, your photos which you have spread on his desk and get OUT, but fast.

What *CAN* an agent or producer, who is so lacking in any knowledge of the theatre, do for you? You may have your place in the entertainment world but he certainly can't find it for you. He couldn't even sell a fire to a freezing Eskimo. The sad part of the whole business is that the agent is more important than the talent you possess. WHY? Simply because you are not a dancer unless you are in front of the pubic. And you won't get that public without the agent. In almost all cases your talent is duplicated and even surpassed by another's. So, do your dance in your own way, with a personality no one else has. But, if the manager of a theatre, hotel or nightclub does not use you, he can get Sophie Entrechat or Billy Timestep and the audience will never know their loss. What is the answer? An agent or a personal manager (we will go into the difference between the two later) who can convince the talent buyer that you and ONLY you are right for the spot.

Night-clubs and hotels are different from theatres in that the latter have the same general proportions. Whereas, night clubs and hotels vary greatly from each other. Some are built like roller skating arenas. There, you would go to dance a number composed of large movements so as to be seen from a distance. That's where the know-how of the agent comes in; picking the right spot for you. He should know if your costumes do anything for you, if your music points up your dance and lastly, if your photographs do you and your costumes and your work justice. That is the *ne plus ultra* of an agent.

But, there's another type very different from the above. (Another personal experience.)

After you have auditioned for this type he says,

"Your work is okay, but you need new costumes. Go see Jack McThread, the costumer, and tell him I sent you. Have him make you some new wardrobe."

Off you go. Then the agent calls up his friend McThread and tells him that you are coming and that he, the agent, expects $25.00 to $50.00 for each costume you order. If the costumer is of that ilk, he agrees and adds

the graft to your bill. Remember, only a few people in the theatre are such chiselers. They are in the lower income bracket and lack the ability to make their rent honestly. The same thing is worked with photographers.

We mentioned, awhile back, that there is a difference between an agent and a personal manager. An agent sells you to the operator of a night club or hotel. He gets 10% of your salary and there his connection with you ends. He collects 10% only as long as you work in that place. There is the story of the agent who was watching one of his acts dancing. He turned to his friend and said, "Look, at that guy. He gets 90% of my salary."

On the other hand, the personal manager or exclusive representative has you under contract for a specified period. He will, during that period, sell you to other agencies. That saves you the trouble of making the rounds. He takes your photos and makes the contacts for you. He will counsel you, watch your rehearsals, help and encourage you. For that, he is allowed more than 10%. He may demand up to 25%, depending on the services he gives you. He must have, moreover, the connections with publicity outlets to get you the 'build-up' every act needs. He must have taste and experience to judge your work. His decisions must be based on reason, not on personal likes or dislikes. He must have enough confidence in himself to back his own judgment.

That reminds me of an agent who auditioned an act. Later, he raved about this dance team. They were sensational, colossal, etc. The next day he had a client who was looking for talent. He had the act audition for this buyer. The latter did not care for the act. That is understandable. Everyone has his own tastes. The agent was so impressed with his friend's prejudices that he told the act they were no b—— good. Remember, only a day had passed and the team danced the same things they had done before. This kind of experience hurts. It turned out later that this agent changed his mind oftener than his shirt. Act after act has suffered the same experience. You are only as good as the last report he hears. His type is quite common.

Then there's the agent, or flesh-peddler, as he is known in the more polite purlieus of Broadway, who signs you under an exclusive long-term contract. At first, you work pretty regularly. But after he has used up his few contacts, you begin to find yourself simply not working anymore. You need a job; you haunt his office, but—nothing for *you*. I never could figure out why an agent I once had, would say, "Nothing today." Just like that: short and curt. When a pretty girl came to see him he would take her into his private office and spend forty-five minutes explaining why he had no job for her.

Here's another. You convince him to see your audition. He agrees. So you hire a rehearsal studio and pianist for an hour. You crowd your costumes into a cab. If you are a girl, you have your nails done, your hair fixed. There you are, all ready and waiting Fifteen minutes elapse; still no agent. You warm up again. Twenty-five minutes. No agent. You touch up your make-up. Your hands are clammy as you realize that you will have barely enough time to do all of your numbers with the costume changes in between. You cast anguished looks at the clock. Forty-five minutes gone. You couldn't finish even one number. Your pianist is idly practicing scales. He should worry. He can afford to practice scales at two dollars an hour, your two dollars. But you behave like a lady and you do not throw your shoe at him. Desperately you call the agent's office. You are told he went out of town. Of course, he never phoned to tell you. Not even a penny post card. You are boiling mad but, since he is an important person, you arrange another audition and you go through the same anguish, the same disappointment. I am thinking of one agent in particular whose only claim to fame is that he has failed to show up for more auditions than any other three agents. I'd mention his name only he promised to audition me next week.

To make up for all these harpies, you have one New York agent, among others, who will keep his promise about coming to see you. He never fails to be courteous. It's even a pleasure to have him tell you he has no work for you; he does it so painlessly. I once asked him about his promptness in coming to auditions. He said that his was a responsible position and that it was his duty to see any talent that was unknown to him. He, and a few far, far too few like him, make you forget all the others. Show business then doesn't seem so hard nor do you feel that you are a completely forgotten cipher in the great world of theatre. You know then that the theatre is a fine place and you wouldn't work anywhere else for all the world.

Ballet Ballads

A Composite Theatre Piece by Jerome Moross, John La Touche, Paul Godkin, Hanya Holm and Katherine Litz produced by Experimental Theatre, A.N.T.A. Maxine Elliott Theatre (now at the Music Box) May, 1948

Fred Fehl

In The Eccentricities of Davey Crockett (choreography of Hanya Holm) a hip-swinging mermaid tried to win Davey from his wife.

Fred Fehl

Rustic group in the Tennessee mountains from the ballet The Eccentricities of Davey Crockett.

Fred Fehl

A bear hunt (chap in front is the bear) in the ballet The Eccentricities of Davey Crockett.

THE Experimental Theatre of the American National Theatre and Academy (A.N.T.A.) brought an interesting experimental season to a close with the ambitious project titled "BALLET BALLADS", a composite theatre piece with music by Jerome Moross, lyrics by John La Touche and choreography by Hanya Holm, Paul Godkin and Katherine Litz.

It is regrettable that this spectacle chose to call itself "*Ballet*" Ballads, rather than something closer to the truth, since *ballet*, as the devout understand it, is here scarcely apparent to the naked eye. The misuse of the word "ballet" leads to some interesting results. Truth to tell, *Ballet Ballads* contain a moderate amount of modern dance, most of which is swamped by preponderent music and lyrics, and this limited dancing is successful chiefly when handled by an experienced choreographer like Hanya Holm.

But in spite of its limitations, this experiment in dancing, singing and poetry makes, for successful and legitimate entertainment. Performed by a group of enthusiastic youngsters, eager and able to please, I feel that the major applause should go to them—for interpretation.

Related, sung and danced in the Dumb Cranbo style of our forefathers, *Ballet Ballads* has an air of improvisation in which, seemingly, the audience participates.

While this is not actually a novelty, since Monteverde (1567-1648) composed the first known opera ballets in which the narrator and the mime were two separate people, who interpreted the same character, e.g. in *The Combat of Tancrede and Clorinda* (taken from Tasso's poem "Jerusalem Delivered") it is still a delightful experience.

In our own times this device has been used by Diaghileff (*Coq d'Or*) and in various contemporary musicals and ballets by Charles Weidman, Agnes de Mille and others.

While the choreography of the various works in *Ballet Ballads* is adequate to good, the works as a whole fail to achieve integration. Many of the situations stated by a singing chorus fails to become visualized by the miming ensemble and the presence of the singers mixing with the dancers during the choreographic action often impedes, rather than speeds the climax.

In folk art, ballads are integral, and while many are brief, their clarification strikes home.

In *Susanna and the Elders* (Katherine Litz), staged as a revival meeting, the chorus action is particularly disturbing. Robbing the biblical story of its necessary privacy, we suppose Susanna was not only chaste and beautiful, but thrifty as well. She must have sold tickets for the event. Ruth Page has utilized the same approach in her recent *Billy Sunday* ballet. *(Please turn to page 34)*

A picture of what happened to ballet in the second half of the 19th century, best entitled "Why Ballet Went Into a Decline" (among other reasons). Actually, it is a representation of the complete omission of the male dancer, and the assumption of travestie roles. All male roles are here danced by women in this opera ballet at the Paris Opera, circa 1875. The Mlles. H. Regnier, Lea Piron, Sandrini and Clary are pictured from left to right.

An Introduction to Ballet History

by **A. E. TWYSDEN**

CHAPTER TEN

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BALLET 1860 — 1900

THE Romantic Period declined rapidly after the successive retirements of Taglioni, Elssler, Grisi and Perrot between the years 1850-1860, but its thirty years of existence left its mark on the world of ballet.

Costume was definitely affected; the long tulle ballet skirts of today owe their existence to the designs for *La Sylphide*, whilst Carlotta Grisi's half-length full skirts and tight bodices, as worn in *Giselle* and *La Peri*, became 'de rigueur' for classical ballet, the skirt getting shorter and shorter until it evolved into the frilly *tutu* of today. Of course, both bodice and skirt varied in colour and ornamentation to correspond with story and setting for each ballet.

Romantic 'stars' were the first to outshine their male rivals, and as a result, male dancers were forced more and more into the position of support rather than that of partner and equal. Later on, following the example of Therese Elssler, girls *en travestie* began to usurp men's parts, and even today the role of Franz in *Coppelia* is so danced at the Paris Opera.

The last *first-class* male dancers seen in western Europe during this period were Lucien Petipa, St. Leon, the husband of Fanny Cerito and producer of ballets for her at the Opera, and Mazillier, whose *La Gypsy* brought fresh laurels to Elssler. Both Mazillier and St. Leon succeeded Perrot in St. Petersburg where St. Leon was known as "Le Poete du Solo" because of his success in arranging individual dances.

The Romantic period provided a final blaze of glory for the French school, for, in spite of their non-French birth, Taglioni, Elssler and Grisi were all pupils of the French classic school, the Italian school in Milan having always been under the direction of French or French-trained *maitres de ballet*.

Unfortunately, after 1860 there was only one young French dancer capable of carrying on the great tradition. Emma Livry, born in Paris in 1842, was a favorite pupil of Taglioni, who arranged for her debut as *La Sylphide* in 1858. The young dancer acquitted herself well, being perhaps inspired by the photograph sent her by Taglioni inscribed: "Faites-moi oubliée; ne m'oubliez pas" (Make me forgotten; forget me not).

Taglioni's only choreographic work, *Le Papillon*, was produced for Livry who had a great success as the girl changed to a butterfly by an evil fairy and she seemed well on the road to fame when in 1862 she was the victim of a fatal accident. Theatres at that time were lit by gas jets and Livry, shaking out her skirts before going on stage during a *repetition generale*, came too near to a naked jet and caught fire. She was so badly burned that she died some months later and with her died the hopes of the French school. Emma Livry, the butterfly, was followed to her grave by two white butterflies which circled over her white coffin during the entire journey from the church to the cemetery. *(Please turn to page 30)*

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In 1837 Carlo Blasis became director of the school of La Scala in Milan, where he inaugurated his own system of training. His results, on the technical side, were tremendous, but the artistic side was not given so much attention as formerly and later, under Blasis' successors, it was more or less ignored. A pretty face, some coquetry and strong mechanical technique were the qualification considered necessary for stardom. The first Italian dancer of this type to appear in Paris, Amalia Ferraris, was admired for her technique but criticized for her lack of poetry. But from henceforth Italian stars were engaged at the Opera which somewhat disheartened the French dancers from the Opera School. One of these, Hortense Leontine Beaugrand, a young soloist, by her dancing inspired the author of *Coppelia*, one of the few great ballets of the period. Beaugrand, however, was not allowed to dance the role of Swanhilda originally intended for her since the Directeur preferred the Russian dancer Adele Grantzova. Rehearsals dragged on for two years and when Grantzova was obliged to return to St. Petersburg, her place was taken by a young Italian, Joseffa Bozacchi, who danced in the first performance in 1870. War broke out and during the siege of Paris Bozacchi died of fever and Beaugrand at last attained the role. She is said to have executed it beautifully. Gautier compared her to Grisi.

After the exile of Napoleon III, ballet in Paris declined still more, until by the end of the century, almost nothing remained but the tradition of its former glories.

However, the "classical dance which was forgotten in France", as Legat puts it, was being developed in St. Petersburg. Christian Johannsen, pupil of Auguste Bournonville, who had been a pupil of Vestris, arrived there in 1841 as *premier danseur classique*. In 1847 and '48 respectively, two of Vestris' former pupils, Marius Petipa and Jules Perrot, also joined the Imperial Ballet. Perrot employed both Johannsen and Petipa as dancers in his ballets and Petipa as an assistant choreographer. St. Leon, who followed, employed Petipa in the same way. In 1862, a new ballet was needed in haste and Petipa, who had already produced several small ballets, offered to provide one. Six weeks later came the first performance of *La Fille du Pharaon* in five acts—and Petipa was promoted to *maitre de ballet*.

Both Petipa and Johannsen, who taught in the school, demanded an excellent technique and much hard study from the dancers. The standard of performance had always been high and since the beginning of the century all the greatest dancers had visited Russia as guest artistes. The new Italian dancers did not, however, appear at first in the Imperial theatres, but in a variety show in a summer theatre.

Later on, the principal star, Virginia Zucchi, was invited as guest artiste for certain performances. She was the first, as well as the greatest of the Italians who appeared. The only male dancer engaged was Enrico Cecchetti, who for some time taught in the ballet school, subject, however, to certain restrictions. The Russians, not unnaturally, set themselves to outdo the Italians and did it so successfully that by the end of the century they completely out-danced and outclassed their rivals. Cecchetti, great technician as he was, could only execute certain movements in one direction; the young Russian male dancers could equal his every movement in either direction.

Such was the company employed by Petipa in his great ballets, over fifty of them, including *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *Raymonda*. In *Swan Lake* Petipa himself was responsible only for the ballroom scene, the more lyrical and romantic swan scenes having been the work of the Russian choreographer, Lev Ivanov, who was also largely the creator of *The Nutcracker*.

As a choreographer Petipa ranks high above all others who preceded him with the possible exception of Perrot, and it is doubtful if any of his successors to date outshine him. His ballets were what we now describe as 'grand classical' for lack of a better term, although perhaps Tamara Karsavina's 'Grand Fairy' ballets serve better to distinguish them from the 'romantic classical' which preceded them. Petipa designed his choreography not only to show off his leading dancers but also his soloists and corps-

Collection George Chaffee

Print of the unfortunate danseuse Emma Livry, who died tragically of burns sustained in a fire at the Paris Opera. She was the protogee of Maria Taglioni. Mlle. Livry is here portrayed in one of her famous roles, Papillon, a name which stuck to her as a nickname.

de-ballet. He had great knowledge of national dances and often employed them. If his dances for his ballerinas were more brilliant than those for their cavaliers It must be remembered that at that period the ballet stood or fell with the performance of the leading dancer.

In the school Petipa insisted on retaining the original conception of the French classic

dance; he allowed his dancers to acquire all the tricks of the Italian dancers but he never permitted mechanical technique to overshadow or distort the beauty and poetry of the dance.

Petipa's ballets can be seen over and over again with pleasure, some new beauty being discovered at each succeeding visit.

(To be continued)

New National Ballet in Sweden

continued

This is, in a way, a Swedish version of "The Green Pastures." For the paintings, often crude and perhaps even conducive to a mild amusement, were, nevertheless, made with reverence by humble and deeply religious men.

It is therefore only natural that they showed the Three Wise Men as three officers in a local regiment, that the Jerusalem into which Jesus rides on an ass is strangely similar to the capital of the province in Sweden where they lived, and that Elijah rides to heaven in a blue-painted surrey, pulled by two dappled horses of unmistakable north-Swedish breed.

The first person to interpret in verse these quaint and touching samples of native art was the late great poet, Erik Axel Karlfeldt, who also held the post of permanent secretary of the Swedish Academy, the body which annually awards the Nobel Prizes in Literature. He called his book "Dalecarlian Paintings in Rhyme" and, being a son of the province, managed to put on paper all the charm, color, and childlike naivete which these unique paintings radiate.

In our day, Rune Lindström, who wrote the libretto to "Johannesnatten," rediscovered the possibilities of this art as interpreted in the spoken word, and a few years ago created a folk play, called "The Road that Leads to Heaven." This, too, was a simple and unpretentious tale of the journey here on earth of a very ordinary young man, who is tempted and yields, but who finally redeems himself and, in a golden hereafter, is reunited with the sweetheart of his childhood. The play was later made into a motion picture, which also scored a great triumph. Now Lindström has invaded yet another field, that of the ballet, and has proven how adaptable this rich and fascinating Dalecarlian material is to almost any medium.

Season In Review

continued

the spirited dancing of the group—of commenting upon the excellent program arrangement. But, instead, we'd like to toss a bouquet at the feet of Doris S. Einstein whose magic with lights must be a source of sheer joy to the dancers. And another fragrant bouquet to the powers behind the throne of The New Dance Group who prove time and again that spunk and talent and *not* money are what it takes to carve a sturdy niche in the art history of the world.

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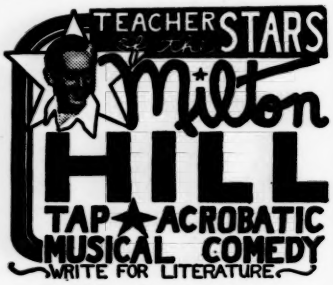

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Pages from a Spanish Adventure

continued

The Ballet Espanol, as it is called, is today the biggest money-maker in the Spanish theatre. It has appeared at as high as a $5.00 top at the famous Teatros Romea in Barcelona, the San Fernando in Seville, the Espanol in Madrid, the San Carlos in Lisbon and numerous others.

Natives and foreigners in Madrid and elsewhere when queried on Spanish life and politics, consistently and invariably remark that you *should* see the Ballet Espanol, if you haven't already.

The repertory of the company has been augmented by new works choreographed by José Greco, such as *Cana y Farruca, Sentimiento,* a pas de deux for himself and Amparo, *Triana, Polo* and a re-staging of the *Three-Cornered Hat* (de Falla) with himself as the Miller. These and other new works not yet staged will be produced by Greco independently of the Ballet Espanol when he forms his own company, later this year.

Last year the Ballet Espanol had as guest artists the legendary Pastora Imperio and a gypsy, Rafael Ortega, both getting on in years, but superb dancers, for Spanish dancers do age gracefully and have great artistic longevity.

There are strangely enough few dancers in Spain who are as well known as Greco and Lopez; there is a popular cantina star named Lola Flores. Carmen Amaya appeared briefly last year in Barcelona and Madrid. She did not fare too well. The once famous Escudero opened in Madrid with a large company. They lasted three days. A distinguished concert artist is Mariemma, now touring America. Ana Maria, another concert artist, has come to America with her group, oddly enough titled Ballet Espanol, although the Lopez-Greco group used the title first in Spain.

José and Nila have met some distinguished people in the course of their Spanish adventure. When they were appearing at the beautiful San Carlos Opera House in Lisbon, Portugal, last year, they received an invitation to meet the former King Umberto of Italy, who was visiting Portugal and living in a suburb of Lisbon. The visit was arranged with great punctilio and a uniformed, white-togged, harlequin-spectacled driver called for the Grecos fifteen minutes before the appointment to bear them on a trip which was usually all of forty-five minutes from the center of Lisbon. The Grecos declare they thought their 'time' had come. The car, a sleek limousine, raced and tore up and down the steep Portuguese landscape like a goat, and made it in exactly fifteen minutes, and the pair was met by a suave secretary, the Count Graziano.

Nila had been instructed to bow to the King just as she took her bows in the Spanish classic ballets, and she sank so far down on her knees before Umberto that it brought a smile to his face, recalling to him, no doubt, ladies less supple. Instead of the usual five minute audience, the Grecos chatted with Umberto for half an hour, especially about Umberto's love for America. When they parted Umberto promised to come to the S. Carlos that evening to see their farewell performance. They did not really believe his promise was anything but a graceful gesture, but that evening, surely enough, there he was—in a box, and his applause was as loud as any heard in the theatre.

Another spectator nightly at the S. Carlos in Lisbon was the pretender to the Spanish throne, Don Juan.

The future of Ballet Espanol at this writing is fairly certain. Pilar Lopez will take the company to South America for a tour, but it will not contain the Grecos. José is making plans for a company of his own to appear in London, Paris, Rome, Madrid and finally America. For all his hispanophilia, well, even a hispanophile can get homesick. The chances are even that America will see this young artist some time in 1948.

Dancing can be Dangerous

continued

difficult to dance. Instead the hour was spent on relaxation and posture. But that night her routine was better than ever. When she tried for three *pirouettes* four came without effort, when she jumped it seemed to her that she never came down. This experience was so gratifying that ever since Miss Suarez has given special attention to developing an effortless style. As attested to by the critics, the effect on the audience is also gratifying.

In July, 1947 Philip Truex was engaged to perform the leprechaun's part in *Finian's Rainbow.* Michael Kidd, the choreographer, knowing that Mr. Truex suffered with a sacro-iliac condition sent him to me for coaching in the role with the hope that his back might be helped simultaneously. As usual in such conditions it was found that when Mr. Truex moved correctly from the dance point of view there was no pain. However the slightest postural error produced unpleasant results, so it was necessary to analyze every motion from this angle. Mr. Truex was a most unusual pupil, learning with remarkable speed. There was time for only three lessons before his predecessor in the part left the show to make a picture. Nevertheless, Mr. Truex, armed with an exact knowledge of how to avoid injury, danced the role for an entire month. At the end of this time his back was stronger than before. Besides, the same principles which protected his back helped him dance expertly. No one out front could tell that the leprechaun was Philip Truex's first dancing role.

During a rehearsal last fall, Hugh Laing, one of Ballet Theater's brightest stars, became violently ill. Nausea, dizziness, weakness made him feel incapable of continuing his work. Seeing him in this condition it was apparent that sickness was destroying his usual fine posture. I suggested that he

rest lying down for a few minutes. In this position it was easy to remind him to let his head relax into the ideal ballet position—a position in which the head rests evenly upon the neck. This permits the neck muscles to relax and the flow of blood to the brain is encouraged. Very gently, I drew Mr. Laing's head away from the shoulders to lengthen the neck and the spine. His spine grew remarkably straight and long. The small of his back which had been arched (as it usually is in sickness) rested flat against the bench. Tension had drawn the hips away from their correct placement. Straightening them, the stomach muscles were relieved and breathing came more easily. By this time Mr. Laing's face was relaxed and cooler. Nausea and all other symptoms were gone.

He returned to rehearsal and danced with his usual vigor for two hours. Five days later, he told me enthusiastically, he remembered this experience when his head began to hurt. He relaxed upon a bench, recalled the sense memory of what I had done for him, and soon the headache disappeared.

* * *

The experiences described above should be encouraging to those dancers whose careers seem endangered by injuries or ill health. Too many dancers have quit dancing through ignorance of proper therapeutic measures.

Looking through interviews I have had with hundreds of dancers, certain facts stand out: As Igor Youskevitch said, "It is the small roles which are dangerous. One tends to dismiss the part as unimportant and not warm up enough. That is when you hurt yourself. When I started to dance I used to be lazy about warming up. Soon my knee hurt me. Since then I warm up thoroughly no matter how small the role."

Another danger point is the attempt to save time by learning steps on only one side. Frances Cole, a fine teacher, feels that her body was severely injured in this way. As a result she never permits a pupil to favor one side.

The most obvious cause of traumatic arthritis of the knees is failure to observe the correct position of the feet. It has become fashionable lately to turn the lifted foot upward to add a filip to the long line of an arabesque. Unfortunately the foot usually remains in this distorted position when it is brought down, and is in no position to support weight properly. More than half the toe dancers I have known have suffered unnecessarily because of improper use of their feet.

Don't strain. In the opinion of Mr. Youskevitch, and very, very few others, strain is a primary cause of muscular pains. "Whenever a dancer pushes, it is technically wrong, and it hurts his body."

If you have already hurt yourself, see a doctor immediately. If all his measures fail to relieve your condition don't consent to an operation until you have exhausted every other possibility. In the opinion of progressive orthopedists, most operations are disappointing in their results. It is usually more effective to eliminate the postural errors which predisposed you to the accident.

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Though Carlo Blassis wrote this more than a hundred years ago, his words have still not traveled to the ears of the young dancer I heard say, "Gee that was a wonderful class. It almost killed me!" Because not only injuries and health but almost every phase of the dance is so drastically affected, we might well paraphrase Horace Greeley's famous words. To the young dancer contemplating a long, hard career, let's say, "Crookedness doesn't pay. Go straight, young man!"

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Ballet Ballads

continued

Willie the Weeper (Paul Godkin), strained through the "blues" of Harlem and New Orleans, takes the lid off the hallucinations of a paranoid marihuana smoker. It affords Paul Godkin some bright dancing moments. Still, *Willie* is another vain attempt to romanticize vice. The choreography seems slightly dated, and the approach has been done before, and better, by Jack Cole in his old Winter Garden Revues. Instead of stark realism, only false excitement is achieved. Groups hurry up and down rope ladders and platforms, costumed in clothes that have the charm of a 2nd Avenue Thrift Shop, but fail to create genuine atmosphere. Sono Osato as Cocaine Lil looked hard and beautiful, but failed to project anything more than a trivial physicality, and not a warm one, either.

In the most coherent choreographic work of the series, *The Eccentricities of Davey Crockett*, Hanya Holm indulges in folksyness on a whimsical scale and creates a gratifying entertainment, in keeping with a pleasingly lyrical score. Betty Abbott, the singer who enacts the mermaid, makes Bea Lillie's "Sea Cow Named Desire" seem mildly like a rasp-

Fred Fehl

Katherine Litz (seated, right) in her own composition, "Susanna and the Elders," a ballet ballad variation of the biblical story.

berry sherbet. She sings (Abbott, not Lillie):

"On land I'm not so special,
I just can't get ahead,
But come in the water, Davey,
For I'm somethin' in a river bed."

The episode of the bear hunt was amusing and somehow reminiscent of Hop-Scotch.

Perhaps this naivete carried forward by negro singers and dancers might be the secret of a major success, as in Gertrude Stein's *4 Saints in 3 Acts*. Were this the case, casting director Celli would approach Katherine Dunham for Susanna, Avon Long for Willie, Josephine Baker for Cocaine Lil, Bill Robinson for Davey, and of course, the Hall Johnson Choir.

But WHY do they have to call it "Ballet" Ballads?

Vincenzo Celli

From Oklahoma to Monte Carlo

continued

During the past year Rosella has danced her way across most of Europe, appearing in Paris, Brussels, Vichy, Marseilles, Lisbon and Monte Carlo. Next will come Holland, Belgium and England, to be visited this summer. But the new international star still looks and acts like the little American girl who studied in Monte Carlo ten years ago. While we chatted at Pasquier's, she was wearing the simplest of cotton dresses, and her long, dark hair was tied back with a single ribbon. Her legs, already slightly sunburned, were bare, and she wore a pair of openwork sandals.

"I don't have time to act like a star," she laughed. "I'm too busy practising and rehearsing and getting ready to try to give a good performance. And after the performance is over, I guess I'm just too tired!"

Man Behind the Costume

continued

instructions given him by Madame Danilova and Balanchine, who were familiar with the original in Russia, he was able to reproduce it.

Hand-painted, forty-three feet around the hem held out and balanced by a heavy cable, further supported by a hoop three feet from the ground, manipulated by wrist loops, it was completed in less than a week. A shortage of cable at the time forced him to make his own from what wire he could find. The hoops were altered four times. Mr. Hartley himself played the role of the Mother Buffoon.

In *Pyramus and Thisbe*, a Botticelli mood was desired. Precise reproduction of any one painting, was both impracticable and esthetically inadvisable. But, through the imaginative use of details recurring throughout a series of paintings, with stress on the characteristic filmy garments and floral patterns worked in pearls, the atmosphere was successfully transplanted.

An exhibition of Mr. Hartley's work, including plates, photographs and completed costumes, borrowed from the various ballet companies, is scheduled for October at the Lucien Labaudt Galleries, 1407 Gough, San Francisco.

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Reviewers' Stand

LESTER HORTON'S Dance Company
Dance Theatre, Hollywood, Cal.
May 22, 1948

It is always heartening to witness the realization of an ambition, and so the audience at the opening program of **Lester Horton's Dance Theater** in Hollywood on May 22nd, felt that extra glow of pleasure as they saw the evidence of Mr. Horton's labors. For years **Lester Horton** has worked toward a permanent home for his company, and a theater specifically devoted to dance, in which his and other dance groups could perform.

During the war years Horton's group scattered into other more immediate activities and he devoted himself to motion picture choreography. Since the war, his group members and friends have persistently encouraged him to reassemble his dancers and continue his brilliant career, and this was the first concert he has presented since 1943.

After five years of quiescence on the part of the group in a world of shattering change, we expected to be startled and thrilled by dynamic new trends in a mature and intelligent art. Instead we saw a program which gave little hint of the years between.

The program opened with a long ballet on Amerindian puberty rites called "Totem Incantation." Mr. Horton is an authority on Amerindian dances and rituals, and he used authentic ritual as the basis for his highly stylized representation of this most important primitive rite. **Carl Ratcliff** as the Shaman created a feeling of emotional tension by his large movement and handling of his scenes with the Young Man about to enter the tribe, danced by **Rudy Gernreich.**

The Indian is a noted stoic, but the emotion evoked at the height of these rites when the hypnotic spell brings before the boy the tribal symbols of the frog, bear and eagle, should have built to a communicable hysteria, which Mr. Gernreich failed to convey, although his dancing was of a high technical order. Other dancers were **Constance Finch, Louise Kreck, Frances Spector** and **Erik Johns.**

The entire ballet was overshadowed by a too involved and sophisticated percussive score by **Judith Hamilton.** The scenery and costumes by **William Bowne,** long associated with Horton, were excellent in suggesting Amerindian motifs and designs in simple, clear colors and lines; and the scenery, consisting of three mobile flats, was cleverly manipulated by two masked figures in sight of the audience.

"The Beloved" was a program piece for two dancers, **Bella Lewitzky** and **Herman Boden.** At curtain opening the dancers were seated on high-backed chairs with a velvet-covered table between them. The costumes were victorian, and the stiff posture of the protagonists and the low-keyed colors set the mood of dark, depressing, barren righteousness.

The man read from the Song of Solomon, Chapter 4, "Thou art all fair, my love;

Leo Salkin

Bella Lewitzky and Carl Ratcliff in the Lester Horton oeuvre, Salome, presented at the Dance Theatre in Hollywood during the June season of the Dance Theatre Company.

there is no spot on thee... Thy lips, O my spouse, drip as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue..." words which led into a dance of violent jealousy and passion, mounting through uncontrolled fury to a crashing denouement of murder.

The dancers were both excellent, technically proficient. Horton gave them extremely difficult off-balance lifts and sweeping falls in unusual choreographic patterns, which conveyed a sensation of unbalanced horror.

Bella Lewitzky, long a leading exponent of Horton technique, demonstrated her proficiency in a beautifully clean-cut piece of work. The years have been extremely kind to Miss Lewitzky. Physically she has changed not at all—she is still angular and dark, but her technique has sharpened, her direction is clarified, and her movement has broadened and is not so frantic; she has become a mature artist. Mr. Boden gives her excellent and expert support in this difficult number.

The music by **Judith Hamilton** was atmospheric and well played by pianist **Mary Hoover.**

The final number of this opening program was "Salome", a choreo-drama. This was indeed a nostalgic note for followers of Lester Horton. The first program I ever saw of Lester Horton dancers in 1936 contained this number, and it has changed very little through the years. Bella Lewitzky danced her original role of Salome, and it is obviously kept in the repertoire especially for her, for it is an intense emotional "tour de force" for her. The ballet, in fact, might be called a dancer's "monologue" for Salome is on stage throughout the action and completely dominates the center of the stage and all other characters who enter. Her intense singleness of purpose becomes inceasingly oppressive until her maniacal passion is finally and forever stopped by Herod himself. Horton has created this exposition of decadence and passion by setting Salome's movements as sure, firm and purposeful, while those of the King, Queen and Boy Eunuch, danced by Herman Boden, Frances Spector and Rudy Gernreich are fussy, undirected and staccato. The use of several platform levels, with **Erik Johns** as John the Baptist in a dungeon below stage level, is also very effective.

This was an interesting program to welcome old friends again, but it is hoped future announced programs will demonstrate more clearly the direction Mr. Horton's art has taken during the war years.

Dorathi Bock Pierre

*

DEBORAH BERTONOFF,
Cort Theatre
May 24, 1948

Deborah Bertonoff's talents are limited to a narrow aspect of theatre, one which leans very lightly on actual dance movement and heavily on mime. Her subject matter is restricted to characterization of uniformly unsophisticated people, of an Eastern European character; her sketches portray only their most superficial characteristics and her costumes are stringently economical, one

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after another in brown and tan, which may be serviceable but does not make the eye happy.

Her opening number, consisting of a couplet on Sabbath activities, exhibits more depth and choreographic quality than the numbers which follow. It shows a peasant woman making preparations for the Sabbath, and then a man enjoying his relaxation with the aid of a glass of schnapps.

The "Country Maid in Town" is perhaps more typical of Miss Bertonoff's unique mimetic style, but the composite of gesture, steps of folkdances and grimaces and grins somehow fails to achieve choreographic unity.

"Pioneer" consists of work movements predominantly, with lots of lusty prancing. The "Schoolboy" tries to pound information into his head by hitting his face and head with a book; the "Schoolmistress" is very officious and severe with her charges, painfully obsequious to a visitor.

There is no denying that Miss Bertonoff's skill as a mime makes for some entertaining moments, especially in the more grotesque charicatures, but it was a disappointment to see so little genuine dancing. In this fault, this excellent mime is no more lacking than any number of European contemporaries who compose dance to this day in terms of movement which American modern dancers left behind them more than a generation ago. No chauvinism or trivial nationalism inspires this comment; the facts speak for themselves.

Mary Jane Hungerford

Seen in Opera Theatre's production of La Serva Padrona in Chicago: Thomas Armour as Vespone.

OPERA THEATRE,
Schubert Theatre, Chicago
May 16, 1948

If you are talking about a theatrical performance today, somewhere you get in the phrase 'lyric theatre'. Whether it's *Ballet Ballads* or *Allegro* or *Orpheus*, it's

'lyric' theatre. You may be a bit suspicious of a label so elastic, one that is bandied about so glibly, but honestly it really fits the distinguished productions of Giovanni Cardelli's **Opera Theatre**, particularly the recent presentation in English, of Pergolesi's comic opera, *La Serva Padrona*.

Jerome Andrews was in charge of the staging and he actually designed choreography for every moment of the opera. The singers sang their pretty tunes and intelligible witty words and moved in a stylized pattern set by Andrews. It was a simple but effective ballet and certainly gave the opera, and the audience, a lift.

Singers Andzia Kuzak and Robert Spiro worked beautifully in this medium and proved that moving about rhythmically has no detrimental effect on one's vocal output. And it looks so much better than standing with hands clasped and eyes rolling ceilingward.

Aside from the singers, *La Serva Padrona* has the important role of Vespone, the guy who mimes on account of he can't get a word in edgewise. This part was danced by **Thomas Armour**, who not only made the comedy hilarious but accomplished some difficult dance bits with the flourish of the fine dancer he is..

A. B.

*

JUDITH MARTIN
Ethnologic Dance Theatre
May 26, 1948

The first solo performance of Miss Martin was well received, and deserved to be, not because of its great excellence but because of the potentialities it exposed. These are a notably fine sense of form and a feeling for line and rhythm. Except for the nervousness that marked the opening *Let Us Begin*, the program was given substance by these talents.

On the other hand, the subject material, particularly in the weightier compositions like *The Exhortation* and *Of Ancient Guilt* (supposedly Freudian interpretations of biblical subjects) never quite merges into integration with dance. Happier results emerge from the lighter dances; *Apparition* is very amusing and *Messenger of Happy Tidings* is also less ambitious and more successful, our too short. In *Decalcomania* the satirical and humorous aspects of the composition lose value because of the immaturity of technique. Although Miss Martin has a good body and a considerable amount of modern dance training, one hopes the horizons of lots of hard work in several different kinds of technique will give her style the distinction it does not yet have.

Sara Hamil assisted ably in *Duet for Two Women*, a pleasant contrapuntal abstraction. Alvin Bauman did well at the piano and Theodore Strongin played flute.

J. L.

*

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of the most promising material on former programs, and for the most part was well chosen, although in a number of instances, a pruning shears could have done yoeman service.

In **Iris Mabry's** *Counterpoint*, (with music by Ralph Gilbert), ten stalwart, dark skinned men, after an affirmative opening passage, mingled, intermingled, entered, and exited with six delicate pastel-clad women. Occasionally Miss Mabry popped on for a solo or duet in her recent frozen vein. And the girls tried to duplicate her very individual style, instead of adding their own personal quality. In this initial group effort Miss Mabry has bitten off more than she can chew. She has not taken real cognizance of the added range provided by composing for group, but has merely placed a multiplying mirror in front of her solo style.

Patricia Newman also believes literally in the term "ars longa". Of the five sections in her *Green Mansions* at least two ("Rima's Fantasy" and "Abel's Anguish") could have been omitted with profit.

Whether the large segment of the story that Miss Newman chose really lends itself to dance illumination is a question. It is difficult to satisfy oneself with Rima scrambling in a low, clumsy tree trunk in plain view of the audience and yet invisible to the searching eyes of Abel (**Wayne Lamb**), and it is hard to believe that the (in this case quite decorous) savage Indians would have bothered to burn the tree men when at all times she was virtually at arm's length.

The idea would probably be more effective as an Abel-Rima duet.

Wayne Lamb was appealing as Abel until he reached the anguish section where his histrionics were definitely on the little-boy side. And in Rima, Miss Newman selected a very suitable vehicle for her slight build and delicate air. But her portrayal, while lyrical and graceful, could have been far more fleeting and nervous, at least to satisfy our own conception of the character.

Waldeen's *Residence on Earth* used up far more saliva than sweat. As the dance unfolded, we felt a strong impulse to rush backstage and shout in our most imperious tone, "Be still! Do be still and let us watch the dancing and hear the music and observe the costumes." But we didn't, and so the voices of Evelyn Manacher and Lewis Norman went on reciting Pablo Neruda's *Hymn and Return (Song to Chile)* and *Spain in the Heart (To the Mothers of Dead Loyalists)*, and the five dancers who started out boldly in an earth-toned dance in pure modern idiom, finally gave in and accompanied the words. It was too bad, for more movement and less talk would salvage a potentionally expressive work.

As usual, **Jean Erdman** showed a welcome sophistication in her realization of *Sea Deep* —a dreamy drama. There are certain things we have come to expect of Miss Erdman—things like impeccable staging, delightful costumes and sets, a genuine feeling for theatre, and fresh, unconventional dance movement smoothly performed.

All these were present again in *Sea Deep*, although it does not achieve the stature of earlier works like *Daughters of the Lonesome Isle, Ophelia, Dawn Song*, and *Transformations of the Medusa*. The reason is a struc-

tural one. *Sea Deep* is diffuse. Even though it is a dream, and dreams are not usually classical in structure, Miss Erdman takes too much time to get to the business at hand—the flirtation between the dreamer and the handsome, egotistical dream man **(Duncan Noble)**. But as the girl who goes fishing and ends up in an underseas kingdom, Miss Erdman does meet some charming company in the form of Three Graces **(Billie Kirpich, Nina Caiserman,** and **Elizabeth Sherbon)** who danced as attractively as they looked in their fish-like costumes. And she has a sprightly Lionel Novak score and Zenia Cage setting consisting of an upstanding shell and a fish-styled bench in which to unravel her flimsy little fantasy.

Annette Conrad's ... *Or Not to Be*, danced by Miss Conrad and **Ruth Wheeler**, and with music by Ada Reif, was a rather stiff little post-student experiment in contrasting movement. Its relation to the Hamlet-inspired title was not readily apparent.

Since **Norman Maxon's** *Threshold* and **Myra Kinch's** *Entrances and Exits* were reviewed in former issues of Dance, we'll not spend too much time on them, except to say that additional rehearsal has rendered Miss Kinch's comedy more palatable.

As for *Threshold*, a new setting by Al Bush and certain very wise cuts in the dance movement make it more direct and convincing than ever. Particularly lovely was the new ending with **Bonnie Merritt** as the young love revolving slowly inside a tall, slender, three-footed prop, instead of leaving the stage as heretofore.

Doris Hering

PEARL PRIMUS
YM-YWHA Dance Center
April 11, 1948

If you look at **Pearl Primus** with a Broadway eye, you see a short, pudgy young woman bursting with animal energy and bounce. You see, too, an engaging smile, eloquent hands, and an occasion moment of exciting technique (like the now famous two-feet-forward leaps in *Hard Times Blues* and the repeated front falls in *Great Gettin' Up Mornin'*). You also get lots of easy-to-understand subject matter. And you come away feeling mighty good. You've spent a very pleasant two hours.

But if you view her with a concert eye, the result is apt to be quite different. For Miss Primus is at best a naive choreographer, whose efforts if put forth by a less dynamic personality, would pass unhailed and unsung. Her material falls into three main categories—primitive, spirituals and other folk-inspired dances, and what might loosely be termed, modern. Her best work is without a doubt among the primitives, where vigor and a feeling of dedication rightfully outweigh choreographic variety and sustained phrasing.

Many primitive dances seem to be constructed on a bi-lateral framework. A movement done on one side is repeated with little or no modification on the other side. Furthermore, one movement is repeated many times over. What makes Miss Primus's primitives exciting to an urbane audience is her own vitality and control (especially in the thighs and pelvic region) and also the musicianly drumming of **Alphonse Cimber**, who

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in this performance really outdid himself.

Of the more lyric primitives we liked the quietly smooth execution of *Myth*, based on the Melanesian myth of the creation and danced by **Lily Peace** and **Padjet Fredricks**, two new and valuable members of Miss Primus's group. Miss Peace, in particular, has a warm, unassuming charm that imparts a glow to all her interpretations. In the *L'Oiseau* section of *Play Dances of the Caribbean* her wholesomeness even outweighed Miss Primus's hoydenish interpretation of the *Conga* portion of the same number.

The settings for the three spirituals, *Motherless Child*, *Gonna Tell God All My Troubles*, and *Great Gettin' Up Mornin'*, are among the best of Miss Primus's recent non-ethnic efforts. The words and music of most spirituals are so vivid in themselves that a dancer is wise if she catches the essential mood in a non-pantomime, non-dramatic way and keeps the dances very simple. This Miss Primus has done with telling effect.

We cannot for a moment comprehend why she has taken a successfully integrated word-and-movement composition like *Strange Fruit* and arbitrarily hacked away the words, leaving a well-nigh meaningless movement interlude. The change has no value, except to prove how good the original was. Of her new dances, *Primitive Pastel* (danced by Miss Primus and her whole group consisting of **Lily Peace, Romenia McDaniels, Jeanne Greenidge, Padjet Fredricks,** and **Matt Turney**). *Another Man Done Gone*, *Scorpio, and Waltz Boogie*, suffice it to say that they are pleasing in a somewhat static, inarticulate way.

Helen Tinsley and **Renee Cutler** supplied vocal and piano accompaniment respectively, and **Camilla De Leon** provided one of her extremely danceable scores for *Primitive Pastel*.

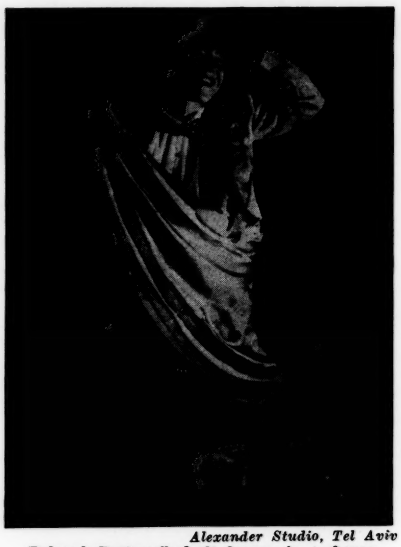
Doris Hering

Fritz Henle

"Journey", the composition of Frank Westbrook, produced for the premiere performance sponsored by Theatre Dance, Inc. employed a concert group including the two dancers herein photographed, Phyllis Gehrig and William Bradley.

BELLA REINE in a Pantomime Recital
Barbizon-Plaza Concert Hall
April 13, 1948

The borderline between dance and pantomime is at best a flexible one, with each borrowing from the other's stock-in-trade. For example, Bella Reine calls herself a pantomimist, and yet she relies quite heavily on planned dance movement (of a rudimentary sort, to be sure, but dance nonetheless).



Alexander Studio, Tel Aviv

Deborah Bertonoff, droll dancer, in a characterization of an Eastern European provincial type. Miss Bertonoff came to America with the Habimah Players and appeared for one solo concert at the Cort Theatre, New York, on May 24.

For subjects she choses a particularly maudlin array of feminine victims of circumstance—an old woman recalling a lost love of her youth *(A Few Violets);* a prisoner remembering the murder of her lover *(The Prisoner);* a pathetic, frost-bitten street dancer *(Street Silhouette);* a besotted street walker remembering the life that could have been *(To Forget);* a tattered Parisian newsboy hawking his wares; two serio-comic peasant sketches; and of course, the usual Degas ballet girl, striking an arbitrary procession of poses from various of the master's paintings and pastels.

Miss Reine's approach to her tear-jerkers is literal, with frequent excursions into the stereotyped and purely sentimental. She possesses neither the highly developed theatrical sense of an Enters, nor even the keen realism of a Ruth Draper. Her gestures are broad and general and rather slow in tempo, with occasionally a sudden staccato flutter

There was a good deal of formal dance movement in *The Milk-Jug* (a variation on the "don't count your chickens" theme), *Street Silhouette*, *Parisian Newsboy*, and *Manhattan Side-Street*. While at times expressive (a "furtiva lagrima" for the street dancer with her running nose), it does not bear discussion on a technical basis. And strangely, her consciousness of dance did not impart to her pantomime the flow and plasticity it sorely needed. All of which proves once again that doing dances and thinking like a dancer are two separate entities. Miss Reine does dances, but she doesn't think like one. The result is mere static gesture, instead of movement with real continuity.

Doris Hering

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